

Station: BERLIN

Reference: AB 51

Source: Savoy

Sub-Source:

Evaluation: B-2

SUBJECT: SOVIET AGENT WEINERT - POSSIBLE DEFECTION

**SECRET**

Report No:

Report Date: 10 June 1946

Information Date: June 1946

Date Info. Received: 7 June 1946

LWX-564

Reference: Special Reports Nos. 194, 238, 273, 281 and 309.

1. On the forenoon of 7 July 1946, WEINERT in a state of ill-concealed excitement (face pale and drawn, nervous flicker of eyes), called on source to tell him that he was "fed up with the whole business" (meaning his work for the Russians), that he was going "to roll his pack and surrender to the English".

2. What had happened was that WEINERT on 5 June 1946 was summoned before the chief of the "Sovietische Nachrichtenbuero" (TASS), Colonel (source cannot recall his name), who told him that it could not be tolerated any longer that WEINERT question the other department chiefs of SNB on what they were doing. He should attend to his own work and quit meddling. WEINERT demurred; since he was new on the job it was only natural that he tried to learn what his 'Nachbarreferate' were doing.

3. WEINERT's opinion of the incident was that the Colonel either suspected his having been placed on the job by the GPU or his working "for somebody else".

4. On the evening of 8th June, Fraulein KARRAS, an employee of the teletype section of SNB, an old acquaintance of WEINERT's, informed him that an investigation against him was under way. All sorts of people had been questioned about his activities in the Party, the Nationalsozialistische Fuehrungsstab and the Propaganda Ministry. She herself had been subjected to a gruelling interrogation lasting several hours.

5. WEINERT commented to source that he did not relish the prospect of returning to the dungeons of the GPU and that he would rather surrender to the English and "spill the beans". He asked source what he would do, given similar circumstances. Source replied evasively that for the moment he did not have a very clear conception of the whole situation, that he did not believe WEINERT was seriously endangered. He advised WEINERT to talk to the Colonel again, this time laying his cards on the table and explaining how it came to his appointment with the SNB. The fact that he had concealed his political and military antecedents could not possibly harm him vis a vis the SNB, inasmuch as Luisenstrasse had explicitly instructed him not to talk about those things and merely to explain that he had worked for the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht.

SSU NOTE: AB 51 pointed out to source that the wisdom of his advice was open to question. SKURIN would most likely take a very dim view if WEINERT should choose to blow himself to the SNB; for all we knew SKURIN had envisaged as a future assignment for WEINERT to keep Luisenstrasse informed on what was going on inside the SNB. There was no reason to believe that the Colonel in charge of SNB and Luisenstrasse worked hand in hand and that the Colonel would take

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very kindly to the idea of having somebody, and a German to boot, placed on his staff as an informant for an outside agency.

6. The final understanding between source and WEINERT was that the latter would see his Colonel on 8 June and ask him point blank whether he was still in his confidence, or whether charges of some kind had been brought against him. It was furthermore agreed between source and WEINERT that under no circumstances would he contact the English, or for that matter take any decisive steps, without previously consulting source.

SSU NOTE:

1) Source believes that WEINERT's distress is genuine. At the same time, extreme caution is in order, because any overt attempt on the part of source to suborn WEINERT into contacting an Allied intelligence agency, is liable to backfire once Luisenstrasse gets wind of his impending defection and decides to forestall it.

2) Source has been instructed to try to influence WEINERT along these lines:

a) WEINERT should abandon all idea of severing his connections with Luisenstrasse. This would be an act of disloyalty towards SKURIN and hardly in keeping with his pro-Russian views. On the contrary, he should apprise CHERNIKOFF of his predicament.

b) However, in order to reinsure himself against any recurrence of this kind, WEINERT should contact an Allied agency with a view to enlisting their help in case of serious duress. It would not be advisable to approach the British who are liable to view his case solely in the light of its intelligence implications; he would be better advised by talking to the Americans who are more likely to stress the humanitarian aspect.

c) In contacting the Americans WEINERT could argue that he is apprehensive lest his avowed pro-Allied sentiments get him into trouble. He could point out that as a ranking staff member of SNB he is particularly vulnerable to being shown up as a 'Fascist'. In case this contingency should materialize, would he be able to count on Allied support to the extent of being granted asylum in the Allied sectors of BERLIN or taken to the Western Zones? Such approach, source would point out, is compatible with WEINERT's obligations toward Luisenstrasse, as long as he does not disclose his affiliations with a Soviet intelligence agency. Should it ever leak out, which is extremely unlikely, that WEINERT contacted an Allied agency, such occurrences could always be explained away as in pursuance of his duties as a journalist.

d) In case WEINERT should decide to ask source's advice as to how he is to go about meeting an interested Allied agency, source has been instructed to mention the name of Major BOND, Public Safety Officer of Berlin District, who is known to have helped out in similar cases, solely on the grounds of a person claiming to be in danger of arrest by the NKVD.

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